

cannot be the subject of any rights. Nonetheless, man cannot simply use them at his whim; he must use them, like every other creature, according to the intent of the Creator. This obligation does not bind him to the animal as a duty (responding to a right that does not exist);

Creator himself, who wants man to use the lower creatures according to their natural fitness with regard to human necessities (eating, etc.)

perimental purposes before moving on to humans). Hence, abuse is still forbidden (making animals suffer unnecessarily; torturing them for the fun of it, etc.);

So we agree with Societies for the Protection of Animals, when they have the aim of removing useless cruelties, all the more since the habit of treating animals cruelly tends to make man insensitive toward human sufferings, too.

But one cannot agree in attributing to animals rights they cannot have, thus impeding, at times, scientific progress as well.

Nor can one indulge in sickly sweet sentimentalisms, especially when these excessive attentions divert the human heart from the primary right of our fellow man to have our understanding.

Nor, in support of certain exaggerated sentimentalisms, can one cite the example of the meekness of some saints (St. Francis of Assisi, St. Anthony of Padua, St. Francis of Paola, etc.)

a work of God, a symbol which raised them toward Him or the reminder of a particular virtue (the innocence of the lamb; the generosity of the pelican, etc.).
forms of exaggerated affection.

Dr. Victor Trad

Lebanon's plight: an appeal to the world

I have accepted with pleasure the invitation from the Schiller Institute to speak at this conference.

To speak of Lebanon today means, unfortunately, to speak of a country that is living through a dramatic war situation, with all the political, humanitarian, and economic problems this condition involves. The Lebanese people for over 14 years has seen itself forced to become used to war and have to forget what it means to live in peace.

This is a sad destiny for the Land of the Cedars, which for centuries has always been the symbol of coexistence among the various ethnic groups and religious confessions: Christians, Muslims, Jews, and Druze . . . and the symbol of freedom, as well as a fundamental meeting-point between East and West.

In all these centuries of Lebanese history, no fewer than 17 different religious faiths have lived in Lebanon, peacefully and mutually integrated with one another.

Greetings and good wishes

Greetings to the conference were received from: His Eminence Cardinal D. Simon Lourdasamy, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches, who sent a letter "formulating wishes for the success of the praiseworthy initiative"; His Eminence Cardinal Josef Tomko, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, who sent a letter in which he "formulates the best wishes for the happy success of the important manifestation"; Father Pierfrancesco Landi, who transmitted the good wishes of His Eminence Msgr. Fernando Charrier, Bishop of Alessandria; His Eminence Cardinal Piovanelli, archbishop of Florence, represented at the conference by Prof. Jacopozzi of the Capranica College in Rome.

Hon. Antonio Gava, Interior Minister; Prof. Francesco Sisinni, Director General of the Ministry of Culture and Environment. The General Directorate of the Culture and Environment Ministry itself sent to the Schiller Institute a letter to Minister Bono Parrino, expressing a favorable opinion of the request to sponsor the conference, "keeping in mind the reflections which the said Council nurtured in the secular and religious society of the time, influencing all the sectors of knowledge and constituting a moment of encounter and reflection between Western culture and Eastern currents of thought"; Hon. Mariapia Garavaglia, Undersecretary of State in the Health Ministry; Hon. Tina Anselmi, president of the National Commission for the Realization of Equality Between Men and Women in the Cabinet, who sent a letter which reads in part: "The topic of this seminar is of great importance and interest and I regret not being able to attend due to previous commitments"; and the Hon. Publio Fiori, Christian Democratic deputy in the Italian Parliament.

These diverse communities, each free to express and bear witness to their own religious faith, have contributed to making Lebanon into the emblem and defender of peace and democracy in the Middle East; a reality, this, which creates a deep contrast with the political situation of the neighboring countries, which are bereft of their freedom and humiliated by religious, personal, or ideological dictatorships.

This contrast has nourished in Lebanon and throughout the Middle East a hotbed of wars and has made our country into an easy target for the expansionist aims of neighboring countries.

The last months' events have demonstrated once again that the war in Lebanon, in its essence and dimensions, is not an inter-Lebanese war, as some would have us think, but rather a war in which regional and international interests are intertwined, which have led to the entry into the Lebanese territory of the Syrian Army (1976) and the Israeli occupation (1982), as well as the influx of Libyan and Iranian groups following the Palestinian presence.

Two occupying powers

At present, Lebanon finds itself under the yoke of two occupations: Israeli and Syrian, with all the consequences that involves, both for the integrity of the territory and the unity of the people. Both these occupations trade pretexts to remain united in a single principle of a single occupation, with two faces but with the same objective and result: the partition of Lebanon into two regions. This division is linked to security interests for Israel and nationalist goals for Syria. It is these two states which have taken away the sovereignty of Lebanon over its territory, creating a precarious situation, with a negative influence on the unity of the people and of the Lebanese nation.

Under this agreed-upon division, the Syrian occupation in the north of the country continues to divide and join, administrating and destroying the spirit of resistance and defense, while the south, shaken by the Israeli occupation, is day by day turning into a security belt for Israeli's borders.

To better understand the latest events, it is necessary to go back to the decisions taken by the Lebanese government before the month of February of this year, that is, the reopening of the transit routes between the Christian and Muslim zones and the closing of the illegal ports, which represents an essential condition for the internal security of Lebanon and hence for its national unity, and which corresponds to a desire of all the Lebanese, of the Arabs, and of the entire world.

This decision was and remains an urgent need and an international demand to block the traffic in weapons and drugs, the contraband and the terrorism; as well as a compelling exigency for Lebanon, to dispel, in the eyes of the world, the evil reputation that these illegal activities have showered on its territory.

Naturally, this political move "disturbed" the Syrian occupation and some other beneficiaries, who have joined their forces to impede this initiative, which would have fed a flame of hope for the reconquest of unity and order.

With its 40,000 troops, its 400 tanks and 1,700 cannons, the Syrian Army is occupying 76% of the Lebanese territory. It has caused the vacancy of the presidency of the Republic and that of Parliament, and now it is about to disintegrate Lebanon before annexing it. Since mid-March 1989, these sophisticated weapons, destined to reestablish strategic equilibrium with Israel, have been launching their bombs against the populous quarters of Beirut, on its periphery and the entire free region, northeast of the capital.

Six weeks after the explosion of Syrian aggression against the Lebanese state and the free region of Lebanon, the country is continuing to suffer inhuman aggressions and the siege by the Syrian occupation army, and incessant bombardments, which have caused irreparable damage. The country is now without electricity, water, and gasoline; telephone communications with the rest of the world are almost impossible; the electrical power plants risk shutdown because they lack fuel; bakeries and food stores are without supplies; Lebanon, in short, has gone back to medieval survival conditions—but with one horror more, the terror of Syrian bombs and a total and hermetic military blockade, recalling that imposed by the Ottomans on Lebanon's coasts in 1916, which cost the lives of one-third of the Christian population.

In a few words, the situation, especially for the Lebanese population, has reached such serious and dramatic levels, that a concrete and urgent intervention is required from every side and at every level.

In the face of this state of siege and this ongoing genocide, what can the countries who defend freedom and human rights do?

They can harshly condemn this aggression and demand the withdrawal from Lebanon of all occupation forces; they can line up in favor of the independence of Lebanon and its right to freedom and democracy; they can withdraw their ambassadors from Damascus (as was done in Teheran following the Ayatollah Khomeini's condemnation of the writer Salman Rushdie to death). With what courage do the free countries refuse to adopt these measures, at a time when an entire people is not only simply condemned to death, but this sentence is even being carried out by Syrian tanks and artillery? These countries, the repositories of freedom and democracy, cannot remain indifferent to the death sentence of a peaceful and friendly country, whose principal feature has always been the coexistence of various ethnic groups, religions, and cultures.

Finally, I make the same appeal to all those present, that each of you, to the limits of your possibilities, may contribute to reestablishing peace and freedom in Lebanon, so that the survival of our faith may also be guaranteed.